

# B&MRRHS Newsletter

*A publication of the Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society*

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B&MRRHS Newsletter

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MEETING/MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION TELEPHONE NUMBER 617/628-4053

## B&MRRHS CALENDAR

B&MRRHS monthly meetings generally begin at 8:00 p.m. on the second Saturday of the month. They are usually held at the Mogan Cultural Center, 40 French Street Extension in Lowell, Mass. However, the schedule often varies so that the date, time and location are subject to change. Before you travel a long way, check your move on the meeting/membership information phone.

**May 9, 1992** - John Allen Roderick, best known as our *B&M Bulletin* editor, and long-term Program Chairman, will be giving us a presentation on B&M railfanning in the mid-70s as well as occasional forays to the west of Mechanicville and north of Wells River. John has also warned us of a surprise ??? twist to the evening. We'll see this one at our Mogan Center projection room.

**June 13, 1992** - These plans are tentative right now, but we are planning to combine with the *Salisbury Point Railroad Historical Society* to travel to the north country to Meredith, New Hampshire. We'll ride a couple of former B&M RDC Budds belonging to the *Winnepesaukee & Pemigewasset Valley (W&PV)* from Meredith along Paugus Bay to Laconia, down to Tilton/Northfield where we'll have lunch and return northward. More will be said about this later.

**July 24, 25 and 26** - From Friday afternoon throughout the weekend, in support of our own *B&MRRHS* and the *National Park Service* we'll staff the B&M Combine M3031 on the B&M track alongside Dutton Street in Lowell as part of the annual *Lowell Folk Festival*. There will be no meeting per se this month, but we'll have plenty of fun, we need plenty of help. Plan on spending at least part of the weekend in Lowell teaching the public what railroading is all about.

## FORMER B&M STEAM LOCOMOTIVE #410 TO BE COSMETICALLY RESTORED!!!

After approximately 12 years of uncertainty, one of the last B&M steam locomotives in New England is going to be restored. Former B&M 0-6-0 #410, will become part of a transportation exhibit coupled to a restored B&M combine on display in the National Park in downtown Lowell.

The *Lowell Historic Preservation Commission (LHPC)*, *Lowell National Historical Park*, *Lowell Heritage State Park* and the *B&MRRHS* are all working together on this project.

The locomotive will belong to the *National Park Service* and the *Lowell Heritage State Park*. The *B&MRRHS* will provide a role of supplying historical and technical data, and helping to coordinate fund-raising and volunteer help. The *LHPC* is expecting to supply

some financial support toward the project, and the *National Park Service* is supplying material and labor. [Jim Nigzus, 4/3 92]

Jim also submitted an article from the March 21st edition of the *Lowell Sun* from which the following has been extracted. The #410, an 81-year old switch engine once hauled granite slabs along with its sister locomotive #444, now on static display in Dunkirk, New York. Both locomotives had seen service at the H. E. Fletcher Co. in Westford.

For years, it was used in Lowell to shunt cars of raw material to and from the mills, then went to the Fletcher quarry in 1950 to move gravestone and curbstone granite.

The #410 was to be restored a decade ago, but plans fell through. Although arrangements have not yet been made final, officials hope to hold a kickoff ceremony soon.

Plans are to roll #410 by train to Dutton Street to be put on static display next to the state-owned B&M combine #M3010. Although no timetable for work has been set, officials hope to complete the move by fall. "Officials concede the project is exciting." Jim Nigzus was quoted, "the locomotive has deteriorated too much to steam again, and is one of three engines left in New England. The engine and slope-backed tender are quite rusted out.

There will be more about this exciting project at Society meetings as plans develop further.

## BOSTON-PORTLAND RAIL SERVICE BACK ON TRACK

State officials selected Amtrak to operate passenger trains between Portland and Boston, marking an important step in reviving rail service in Maine.

But the decision makes for a sticky situation as the state prepares to negotiate with the existing track's owner, Guilford Transportation Industries Inc., which was edged out by Amtrak.

Without GTI's cooperation, officials say, the federal government could throw a wrench into the plan by withholding \$30 million that would be used to upgrade the track.

To mollify Guilford, the Maine Department of Transportation wants to pay the rail line \$30 million to rehabilitate the tracks and maintain the system, said Michael Murray, the state's rail specialist.

If that's what they want to do, we'll work with them. I'd rather have us running the train," said Colon Pease, Executive Vice President for Guilford in Billerica, Massachusetts. Maine Transportation Commissioner Dana F. Connors said

splitting the duties between Amtrak and Guilford has several advantages over allowing Guilford alone to provide the service. Amtrak promised to provide \$20 million worth of engines and cars, and also made a commitment to pay more than a half of a \$3 million operating subsidy in the first year, and some \$1 million in the following years.

Meanwhile, Guilford's involvement will provide jobs in Maine because the company would perform the track work and maintenance duties from the Springfield Terminal railway yard in Waterville, Connors said.

"What we've tried to do here is present this is a win-win situation," Connors said.

The choice of a carrier is the third major hurdle to be cleared since the legislature last fall authorized the transportation department to raise money to restore train service. Passenger service ended in 1965.

[Submitted from several sources - ABT]

### ST SIGHTINGS

It now appears that a new spirit of cooperation between labor and management exists in order to achieve a faster and higher level of productivity to keep the active locomotive fleet running. Among a total ownership of 159 locomotives, an average of 72 units a day make up the active operating fleet.

A major step backwards with the overhaul of the B&M GP40-2 #316 took place in mid-February. During the initial startup and placement of the unit outdoors from the Waterville shop, the unit shut down unbeknownst to the personnel responsible. The unit froze up solidly, and sustained engine damage. Weather was a major factor with extremely low temperatures.

Also, currently shopped for the overhaul program are the B&M #315, 342 and 600. The SD39s #691 and 693 were shopped for evaluation, and after determination that both units needed main generators, and along with C1104, tests both units were put into stored status in the ranks of the dead lines. The #690, in need of traction motors and B test also remained out of service. The 692 has seen the most service time, although seldom as a lead unit, it has been spotted on WADH and NESE often.

The newly-acquired Alco C424s, former D&H 70, 74, 75, 452, 453, and 454 have been slow to be renumbered to the 450-455 series, and restenciled along with the big "G" application and new ownership by Maine Central. The #450 has seen duty mu'd with ST #54 (ex-B&M #1723) working the west end of the Waterville yard.

The #74 worked at Rigby during mid-January, but was returned to Waterville with an inoperative clutch fan. The #453 has been stored with

mechanical problems on the "dead line" tracks. The #452 and #454 have seen a number of trips back to Binghamton by way of WADH and DHWA, (270/271 trains). The #75 has seen repairs on electrical problems.

It appears now that about half of the acquired Alcos are in operation. The U23-Bs have been put into stored status, the U18-Bs see the #404 in service. The 405 down with crankshaft problems and test, #406 and #407 have seen shop time with electrical problems. The #407 sported the gray and orange paint in early January, but has not actually seen road service since road tests and mechanical problems.

If the U18 fleet is to be rebuilt and operating per leasing agreements, they have a long ways to go. The #400 needs power assemblies and test, the #401 having a rod pushed right through the block is not a rebuild candidate. The #402 has electrical problems, turning in limited service after repainting. The #403 has been stored since 1989, cannibalized as with the #408 and #409 since 1987. ST #26 remains stored since January 22nd after an accident where the unit went off the turntable damaging the frame, brake rigging and ripping the side sill.

ST #688 is in tough shape after a cylinder problem was uncovered, and a possible freeze problem resulting from not being drained. Note: on the #281 which was operational until January 21st, the #281 was being utilized at East Deerfield when the unit froze up, upon restarting, it was discovered that the shaft had a badly damaged rod impaled through it. The unit had traction motors and other usable items taken out of it at Waterville where it is now stored.

Where's the ST #12??? Assigned to ST/MEC furthest east terminal... namely Woodland. The ST GP7 and GP9s are

slowly becoming extinct... As of early February, the following are out-of-service for various problems; ST #23, through 26, 28 through 30, 40, 47, 57, 62, 65; SD26s 622, 639, 644, 647; GP40-2s 315, 316, 325, 330, 331, 333, 338 and 342. Active SD26 units are 614, 615, 619 through 621, 627, 633, and 643.

Don also mentioned in his submission about the D&H/CP going on, which is too lengthy to include here, that recent visitors to Saratoga (NY) thence to Binghamton include ST units #452, 454, 311, 317, 327, 614, 619, 633, 680, 681, 682, and 686. He added that there is no news in CP's interest in acquiring the "Southern Tier" from Conrail, and that talks are still underway. Also, he mentioned in CP's interest that the B&M lines into Ayer, for a reasonable price "is far from a dead issue".

[Don LeJeune, 2/17/92]

### SALEM TOWER CLOSES

Another milestone on the B&M's Eastern Line became history early on Saturday morning, March 1st at 12:31 a.m. when the last outbound train (#145) for Rockport, with connections to Ipswich left Salem was logged in at the Salem (MA) tower. An Amtrak employee, Stan Marsh, was the dispatcher on duty to log in the train as it emerged from the tunnel and into the station.

The tower is located at the Bridge Street end of the tunnel which passes under Washington Street along the main business district and courthouses.

The line from the south portal of the tunnel is single-tracked through to the Salem station for almost a half-mile. At the north end of the tunnel are two portals, the beginning of a wye. The

Salem Tower is just outside of the tunnel between the northern end portals. When the station stop in Salem was moved from the south end of the tunnel to the north end along about 1987, the westernmost of the north portals and leg of the wye was partially closed, and its track removed. That part of the wye had served as the North Street station when the Eastern line had terminated in Salem after the fire which destroyed the Beverly-Salem bridge.

The easternmost of the north portal of the tunnel is the active Eastern Line towards Rockport and Ipswich. The other part of the wye branches off north of the Salem station towards Peabody and Danvers. A few commercial users are served by Guilford locals from Castle Hill yards at the west end of the tunnel.

With the closing of the Salem tower, all trains will be routed through the tunnel by a dispatcher located at North Station in Boston.

[Submitted by Steve Butterworth with information from the Salem Evening News, March 2, 1992]

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## OOPS!!

In the news item appearing in the January/February issue of the *B&MRRHS Newsletter*, "January Board of Directors Meeting", the Boston Street Railway Association (BSRA) was inappropriately given as the sponsor for the Boston Trolley Meet over the upcoming June 12th through 14th weekend at the Lowell Sheraton Hotel. The proper sponsor for the Boston Trolley Meet this year, as has been for many years, is the Boston Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society (NHRHS). With due respect to both organizations, I want to ensure that the appropriate organization receives due credit for a large well-received activity. [ABT]

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## WHOOOPS IN LINCOLN, MASS

On February 16th shortly after 12:30 p.m., Boston-bound MBTA commuter rail train on the former B&M Fitchburg Line hit the trailer of a flat-bed tractor-trailer rig at the Tower Road crossing in Lincoln, Massachusetts. The rig had become stuck on the crossing just off of Route 117 in that town.

Shortly after the first incident, a Fitchburg-bound commuter rail train struck the debris of the first incident. Fortunately, the train crew was alert and warned the passengers of an impending collision and hard stop. Reportedly, only eight passengers were injured.

The inbound train with cab control car #1621 sustained extensive damage,

and the outbound train with F40PH 1006 on the point received relatively minor damage.

[ABT from various sources]

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## CHANGING FACES

One does not have to try hard to see differences in the appearance of recent issues of the *B&MRRHS Newsletter*. Some changes in the appearance are subtle, some not so subtle, but all changes are being made to mitigate some type of problem. Some of the problems are expediency, just plain delivering the Newsletter to your mailbox in a timely fashion.

For years, this has entailed, transfer of hardcopy, and more recently diskette files to Florida for composition, and after printing and on appropriate occasions marrying the Newsletter with the *Modeler's Notes*. Your editor composes the Newsletter most of the time, but is very capably backed up by Jeff Ursillo when business trips or other commitments pre-empt his busy schedule. And Bruce Warren puts in many hours planning and composing the *Modeler's Notes*. Jeff Ursillo makes the final copy preparation and stripping in of photographs, and prints, folds and inserts the *Modeler's Notes* inside the Newsletter.

The printed package is then shipped to Kingston, New Hampshire where Dennis Adams and his diligent crew spend several hours assembling additional B&MRRHS merchandise flyers or notices of upcoming events, fastening the packages and affixing the mailing labels. Somebody along the line ends up with nasty paper cuts on his or her hands from paper handling.

Recently a resolution problem cropped up from a dot matrix printer to which some of you commented. And earlier, when we had the single-sheet folded over format, some of the automatic canceling machines used by the postal service sometimes chewed up whole packages, or enabled enough of the address to show so that the recipient received a single folded-over sheet, the contents within going to who knows where. And the U. S. Postal Service is becoming increasingly more vocal about how they want mailings prepared.

We all have stories about missing a meeting because the Newsletter arrived the week after the meeting, and this, of course is most regrettable, but we are working in it. You should have received an interim calendar ahead of this Newsletter.

And, while we are changing, there seems to be an undesirable trend, and that is the lack of photographs,

particularly black and white, for the Newsletter. It seems that the trackside fan has switched over to videotape, and VHS format is hard to print in the Newsletter. (Your editor is guilty of this also). And, of course, when it rains, it pours and then there is a lot of text activity which diminishes room for photos. Nuff said: I'll get off the soap box. [ABT]

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## HIGH-TECH SNAFU

This item is in the "In case you wondered, but were afraid to ask," department. If you are among the several B&MRRHS members who used a Visa or Master Card to renew your membership or purchase merchandise from the B&MRRHS in late 1991/early 1992, and haven't been billed for it, you won't have to hold your breath much longer. Perhaps you have even forgotten about it.

Your editor, who also wears the hat for making Visa/Master Card deposits, in early January made a deposit of Visa/Master card receipts for member transactions at the bank with whom we have been transacting for several years. Around the latter part of January, we learned that the deposit had gone through to credit the account, then a few days later had been rescinded and debited he account by the same amount.

Making a long story short, the person entering the data from the receipts entered a bad number, and failed to use her imagination because she had a good merchant i.d. all around her. As a result, a couple of batches of receipts from the Society "bounced". A few of us had to track the course of the receipts through the banks various departments and processing locations, because for a while, not even the bank could tell us what was wrong.

After a couple of lost lunch hours, and talking to several bank folks, it turned out to be a bank error, and the problem was resolved late in March, a couple of months of delay.

Amends by the bank??? "We're sorry, but she apparently didn't have any imagination!!!" What does that leave me to tell you? I'm sorry also, but I can say that Visa/Master Card transactions you made more recently should proceed as normal. So much for the human element of high-tech. [ABT]

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## B&M/MBTA RDC UPDATE

An individual (unnamed) from Bath, Maine recently purchased former MBTA RDC-1s 9151, 9154, 9158, 9159 and 9161, (ex-SEPTA, nee-RDG same

numbers). On December 31, 1991, they were moved by the New England Southern to Tilton, New Hampshire where they were picked up by Hobo Railroad's former B&M S3 #1186 and moved to Lincoln, New Hampshire for repairs.

On February 7, RDC-1s 9152 and 9162, (ex-SEPTA, nee-RDG same numbers) departed Boston enroute to the Reading Technical & Historical Society at Leesport, Pennsylvania. The 9152 has the distinction of being the last RDC built, in December 1962. [Railpace, April 1992]

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### FOR SALE

B&M Railroad station for sale, built in 1899, 12 miles north of Concord, New Hampshire with agent living quarters on 2.7 acres of land. It has a reportedly good water supply. Make an offer! to J. Birnie at the Northfield Depot (603) 934-4408.

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### AMTRAK JOB ACTION POSSIBLE

Handbills by members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees have been distributed among some MBTA Commuter Rail facilities and on trains out of both North Station and South Station toward the end of

March. The handbill warns of a possible strike of maintenance of way (M/W) employees against Amtrak which operates the MBTA's commuter rail lines, and maintains MBTA tracks and structures.

It warns that the 30-day "cooling-off" period which began on March 4, 1992 after Amtrak rejected the National Mediation Board's offer to arbitrate. On April 4th, Amtrak is free to strike. The M/W employees, through distribution of the handbill was trying to explain that the dispute is not with the commuting public, but with Amtrak.

"We are all employees of Amtrak, and not of the MBTA," the handbill said. "We maintain the tracks and the structures that the MBTA owns." It goes on, "When the Commuter service contract was awarded to Amtrak in 1986, our position were done away with on the Boston & Maine Railroad and in order to keep working, we took cuts in pay, some in up to \$1.50 per hour and went to work for Amtrak. Our current contract with Amtrak expired on June 30, 1988 and since that time we have been trying to negotiate a new one with Amtrak without success. Our wages are nearly the same level as they were in June of 1984."

The handbill concludes that the M/W employees do not want to inconvenience the travelling public in any way, but "continue to do our jobs of maintaining

and operating your service and be fairly compensated for our efforts". In the unresolved scenario of the handbill goes on "If we must strike to protect our families futures, then strike we will, and for that we apologize in advance". [ABT]

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### CRAWFORD NOTCH OPERATIONS DELAYED

The Mountain Division Railroad's plans to operate tourist passenger trains over the former Maine Central (MEC) Mountain Division through Crawford Notch has been set back until June of 1993. The Mountain Division is currently seeking to acquire matched passenger equipment along with diesel power. This equipment is expected to operate until and/or during the operation of the *Flying Yankee*, which is in the process of being acquired. [Railpace, April 1992]

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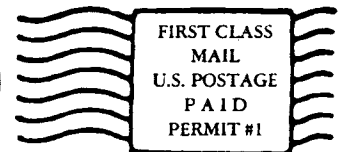
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